

Remarks/Arguments

In response to the Office Action dated December 1, 2004, Applicant has amended the Abstract in accordance with the Examiner's request in order to facilitate the prosecution of this application, though Applicant does not acquiesce in the Examiner's reasons for objecting the Abstract. Claims 1-9 are presented for examination in the subject application.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,269,361 (hereinafter "Davis"), and allegedly further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,332,127 (hereinafter "Bandera").

Specifically, the Examiner cited Davis for its alleged teaching of a database created for searching websites advertised on a billboard, by interpreting the term "billboard" as "any website or web-page on the internet, such as the search engine web site showing on Figure 7 of Davis's patent" (Footnote 3, pg. 3 of Office Action). Furthermore, the Examiner asserted that Bandera allegedly discloses including a location where a user may have seen an advertisement of the web site address on the billboard as one or more web site identifiers. As such, the Examiner concluded that Davis may be properly combined with Bandera to produce a database as taught in the subject application.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. First of all, Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines "billboard" as "a large panel designed to carry outdoor advertising." Similarly, an online dictionary source, Dictionary.com (<http://dictionary.com>) defines "billboard" as "a panel for the display of advertisements in public places, such as alongside highways or on the sides of buildings." While Applicant acknowledges that the term "*electronic* bulletin board" has sometimes been used to describe web pages that promote the exchange of ideas, where users may post queries or classified advertisements, Applicant is not aware of, and after diligent online search was unable to

find, any website that refers any of its web pages as a “billboard.” More importantly, the Specification clearly defines the meaning of the term “billboard” as it is recited in the claims (see, for example, pg. 6 first full paragraph). It is well established that an applicant may be its own lexicographer. As the common meaning defined by common dictionaries and the Applicant-defined meaning of the term “billboard” both contradicts the Examiner’s interpretation, Applicant respectfully submits that the term “billboard” cannot be interpreted to include the search engine web site disclosed in Davis. Therefore, as a threshold issue, claims 1-9 are patentably different than the teachings of Davis or Bandera, either alone or in combination.

Turning now to Davis. The system and method disclosed in Davis are directed to assisting a website promoter to “influence [the website’s] position within [a] search result list . . . by participating in an online competitive bidding process.” Col. 4, line 66 – Col. 5, line 17. In other words, search engines that adopt Davis’s system would systematically produce search results that would include websites that have paid to have their web addresses appear in the search results, with the highest “bidder” on top and regardless of whether the search term has anything to do with the website. Indeed, as long as the website promoter pays for a specific search term, the website would appear on the search result whether the search term is relevant, marginally relevant, or not relevant at all to the services or products of the website. This is fundamentally different from the present invention.

Applicant discloses a method for a “directed search,” where the search result is always relevant. Unlike the database taught in Davis, a database in accordance with the present invention guides a user to find a website whose address the user has already seen on a billboard advertisement. More specifically, the information providers are directed to a query sheet on which they must input relevant information answering each of the questions on the query sheet, and the users search the database by answering the same guided questionnaire (See, for example, pg. 8 and last paragraph of pg. 9 of the Specification). Only when the answers from both the provider and the user match would the database produce a search result. As such, the search results produced by the subject

invention would always include the most relevant websites. In fact, one of the main objectives of the present invention is to eliminate the type of cacophony of retrieved information from a search result as taught in Davis.

Referring now to Bandera. It discloses a system and method directed to a “mobile web client” with the use of a Global Positioning System (GPS) for tracking down the location of the client. Col. 2, lines 36-53. Bandera teaches locating a user’s physical location from a GPS or similar device, and transmits advertisements local to the user’s position. Col. 2, lines 42-49. Therefore, the advertisements presented to the user are not requested by the user but are generated based on the user’s location together with the website(s) the user browses through at that location.

On the other hand, the present invention teaches a system and method for searching a website that the user has already seen on a billboard and requests to retrieve such information. Furthermore, the “location” of the user is input by the user as a guided search parameter for searching the desired website and not generated by a GPS system for sending unwanted advertisements to the user which has nothing to do with the website. Another key difference is that the “location” input by the user and used by a database in accordance with the present invention is where the user was when the user saw the advertisement on the billboard; whereas in Bandera, the GPS system tracks the user’s current location.

Because the teachings of Davis and Bandera are fundamentally and patentably different than those of the present invention, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-9 are not obvious in view of Davis or Bandera, either alone or in combination. Accordingly, the Examiner’s rejections under § 103 have been obviated.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly overcome, and that the application is fully in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

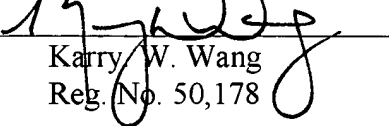
Appl. No. 10/828,640
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Reply to Office Action of Dec. 1, 2004

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned representative if the Examiner believes that an interview may be useful for any reason. Furthermore, Applicant would like to remind the Examiner of his promise that he would telephone the undersigned representative prior to issuing a final office action.

Respectfully submitted,

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